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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER

TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES
DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US)
CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371

RSA254A US

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 CFR 1.5)

09/509853

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.

INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE

PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED

PCT/FR98/02112

02/10/98

03/10/97

TITLE OF INVENTION

Wheel-balancing device and wheel equipped with such a balancing device

APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US

Raymond De Cagny, Gilles Le Moal and Jacques Delevoey

Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:

1. ☒ This is a FIRST submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
2. ☐ This is a SECOND or SUBSEQUENT submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
3. ☒ This express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)) at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set in 35 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and 39(I).
4. ☒ A proper Demand for International Preliminary Examination was made by the 19th month from the earliest claimed priority date.
5. ☐ A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2))
 - a. ☐ is transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ has been transmitted by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US).
- ☒ A translation of the International Application into English (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).
- ☐ Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3))
 - a. ☐ are transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ have been transmitted by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.
 - d. ☐ have not been made and will not be made.
- ☒ A translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).
- ☐ An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)).
- ☐ A translation of the annexes of the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).

Items 11. to 16. below concern document(s) or information included:

11. ☐ An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
12. ☐ An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
13. ☒ A FIRST preliminary amendment.
 - ☐ A SECOND or SUBSEQUENT preliminary amendment.
14. ☐ A substitute specification.
15. ☐ A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.
16. ☒ Other items or information:
 1. Formal Drawings;
 2. Copy of the European IPE Report with Translation to Follow;
 3. Certificate of Mailing under 1.10;
 4. Postcard; and
 5. PTO-1449.

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 CFR 1.5)		INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.		ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER	
09/509853		CT/FR98/02112		RSA254A US	
17. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following fees are submitted: BASIC NATIONAL FEE (37 CFR 1.492 (a) (1) - (5)): Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO and International Search Report not prepare by the EPO or JPO \$970.00 International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but International Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO \$840.00 International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO \$690.00 International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) paid to USPTO but all claims did not satisfy provisions of PCT Article 33(I)-(4) \$670.00 International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) paid to USPTO and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(I)-(4) \$96.00 ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT :				CALCULATIONS PTO USE ONLY	
Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(e)).				\$ 840.00	
CLAIMS		NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE	\$
Total claims		28 -20	8	x \$18.00	\$ 144.00
Independent claims		2 -3		x \$78.00	\$
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM(S) (if applicable)				+ \$260.00	\$
TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =					\$ 984.00
Reduction of 1/2 for filing by small entity, if applicable. A Small Entity Statement must also be filed (Note 37 CFR 1.9, 1.27, 1.28).					\$
SUBTOTAL :					\$
Processing fee of \$130.00 for furnishing the English translation later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f)).					\$
TOTAL NATIONAL FEE :					\$ 984.00
Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31). \$40.00 per property +					\$
TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED :					\$ 984.00
					Amount to be refunded: \$
					charged: \$

- a. ☒ A check in the amount of \$ 984.00 to cover the above fees is enclosed.
- b. ☐ Please charge my Deposit Account No. _____ in the amount of \$ _____ to cover the above fees. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.
- c. ☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 22-0212. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137 (a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.

SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

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27053

REGISTRATION NUMBER

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor(s): Raymond De Cagny
Gilles Le Moal
Jacques Delevoye

Title: Wheel-balancing device and wheel equipped with such a balance device

Preliminary Amendment

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Box PCT - DO/EO/US
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Please enter the following Preliminary Amendment to the above identified application to eliminate improper multiple dependent claims.

In the Claims

Please amend Claims 6-19 and 23-28 (modified Claims 6-19 and 23-28 as set forth on replacement pages 14-16 attached to the accompanying application), as follows:

Claim 6, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1 to 5" and insert ---- claim 1

Claim 7, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1 to 5" and insert ---- claim 1

Claim 8, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1 to 5" and insert ---- claim 1

Claim 9, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1 to 8" and insert ---- claim 1

Claim 10, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1 to 9" and insert ---- claim 1

Claim 11, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1 to 10" and insert --- claim 1

Claim 12, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1 to 11" and insert --- claim 1

Claim 13, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1 to 12" and insert --- claim 1

Claim 14, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1 to 13" and insert --- claim 1

Claim 15, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1 to 14" and insert --- claim 1

Claim 16, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1 to 14" and insert ---claim 1

Claim 17, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1 to 16" and insert ---claim 1

Claim 18, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1 to 16" and insert ---claim 1

Claim 19, line 1, delete "any one of claims 1 to 16" and insert ----claim 1

Claim 22, line 1, delete "or claim 21."

Claim 23, line 1, delete "any one of claims 20 to 22" and insert ---claim

20 ----.

Claim 24, line 1, delete "any one of claims 20 to 23" and insert ---claim

20 ----.

Claim 25, line 1, delete "any one of claims 20 to 23" and insert ---claim

20 ----.

Claim 26, line 1, delete "any one of claims 20 to 23" and insert ----claim

20 ----.

Claim 27, line 1, delete "any one of claims 20 to 23" and insert ----claim

20 ----.

Claim 28, line 1, delete "any one of claims 20 to 27" and insert ---claim
20 ----.

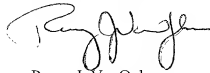
Remarks

Please enter the above amendments that are for the purpose of eliminating multiple dependent claims from the accompanying application. The late receipt of this application from the foreign agent relative to the priority necessitates the filing of this case with the above limited Preliminary Amendment. A further Preliminary Amendment placing the complete application in condition for examination will be filed in the near future.

If there are any questions with respect to this Preliminary Amendment or any matter relating to this application, Applicant's attorney may be reached at (248) 362-1210.

Respectfully submitted,

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Wheel-balancing device and wheel equipped with such a
balancing device

5 The present invention relates to balancing wheels of
vehicles provided with tyres.

If it happens for some reason that the wheel of a
vehicle becomes unbalanced, the best-known means for
remedying this defect is to place weights on its rim at
appropriately-selected points, the weight and position of
10 which re-establish the faulty equilibrium. This technique
has the particular disadvantage that the springs, which
ensure the firm fitting between each weight and the rim
cause permanent local scratches on the rim when they are
being installed such that when it is necessary to replace
15 the weights when a new balancing is carried out, the
marks left by these springs remain visible, so that the
appearance of the rim is displeasing. It should be noted
that this principle is not possible for all types of
rims; in fact, balancing weights are in practice arranged
20 on the peripheral edges of the rim which ensure an
excellent retention of these weights with regard to
centrifugal force which means that standard weights
cannot be mounted on wheels the rims of which are not
provided with such edges.

25 Document FR-1.151.191 proposes a balancing principle
capable of being used in the previously-mentioned case of
rims without edges. This aims to provide a vehicle wheel-
balancing device which can be easily installed, which is
easily removed and which is nevertheless securely fitted
30 without separation despite the relative high stresses to
which the device can be subjected. It is proposed to
encircle the balancing weight with a band attached to the
rim of the wheel. It is pointed out that the belt is
advantageously firmly fixed to the weight: it is
35 preferably attached by weld points between the hasps of
the belt and the rim and it is specified that this allows
the device to be installed and removed several times as
the weld points can be broken using a cutter or similar.

It is clear that this solution has the disadvantages outlined with regard to the attachment springs as the welding operations and then the separation by cutter inevitably leave displeasing marks. Moreover, rims which
5 do not have edges are not generally made of weldable materials (aluminium rims, for example).

More recently, it was proposed to balance wheels by securing the weights onto the rim using an adhesive layer with which they are provided. However, the adherence of
10 the weights proved to be unreliable for use, in particular when washing the wheels under intense pressure. Moreover, the displeasing nature was still present, above all for aluminium rims (visible lumps or adhesive fragments remaining stuck to the rim).

15 Document US-A-3,786,850 describes a balancing principle aimed at combining the balancing and personalization of a wheel. It was proposed to replace standard balancing weights in lead by very visible weights to which characteristic shapes are given
20 (letters, numbers, symbols, etc.) and which are stuck to the tyre to form attractive and characteristic designs; the weights are preferably made of rubber, for example loaded with reflective particles or with decorative metallic particles to make them as visible as possible.
25 It is not envisaged that the balancing weights could be removed as one of the aims of visible balancing weights is to discourage theft (this aim can only be achieved if all attempts to disguise the distinctive character leaves redhibitory visible traces). In fact, the choice of
30 rubber to produce the balancing weights gives each weight a moderate mass compared to that of a balancing weight in lead which means that the forces of centrifugal origin applied to each weight are much weaker than with lead weights. On the other hand, in practice, numerous
35 balancing weights are required to balance a wheel (it was even envisaged to exceed the total balancing weight required, and to add, on the opposite side of the wheel axle, additional characters compensating for the excess

weight); without doubt, much time is required to correctly install all the balancing weights required. This document is therefore completely incompatible with any attempt to balance a wheel quickly or to carry out this balancing in discreet fashion.

A subject of the invention is a balancing device allowing a wheel to be balanced rapidly and easily whatever the characteristics of the rim, which is advantageously adapted to resist significant mechanical stresses (centrifugal forces occurring while driving at high speed as well as stresses generated when, for example, scraping against the curb of a pavement), the presence of which can be very discreet and which leaves barely visible traces when removed for a new balancing.

To this end, the invention proposes a balancing device for a wheel comprising a balancing weight enclosed in a case the surface of which is adapted to be integral with a tyre and which is made of material having a similar colour to that of a tyre.

It also proposes a wheel comprising a rim having an axle, a tyre and balancing device comprising a balancing weight enclosed in a case the surface of which is integral with a surface of the tyre and which is made of a material having a similar colour to that of this tyre.

It can be easily understood that, as the balancing weight is attached by its case to the tyre of a wheel, the implementation of the balancing device does not depend on the characteristics of the rim. Moreover, a material of any chosen density can be used for the balancing weight, for example lead as in the previously-mentioned balancing procedure, without having to worry about its connection to the wheel; the number of balancing devices to be installed during balancing of a wheel is therefore as low as with the standard lead weights. The attachment of the balancing device to the wheel is ensured by the case the material of which can be chosen for its bonding qualities to the material of the tyre without worrying about its density; it is thus

possible to choose a material for the case which can be easily firmly fixed to the tyre, which guarantees that the attachment will resist significant stresses. The question of choosing a material for the case which is almost the same colour as the tyre does not pose any problem in this respect (it is sufficient to choose a material for the case which is almost identical to that of a tyre). It is not necessary that the pairing formed by the material chosen to constitute the balancing weight and the material chosen for the case be easily firmly physically attached to each other as the weight is enclosed in the case, and that the retention of the weight in the case can optionally be obtained without bonding by gluing or welding between these two materials.

In fact, as the weight is hidden, it can be given a specific geometry allowing a good physical anchorage (by geometry) of the case, with for example cavities, grooves, ribs, cross-cut passages, etc. into which the material of the case penetrates or alternatively which can be anchored in the thickness of the case. The preparation of the surface of the case can be a glue coating such that the balancing device is easily installed by exposing the coated surface to the air and applying it to an appropriate zone of the tyre (in practice, a side). If it is necessary to change the position of the balancing devices during a subsequent balancing, it is sufficient to remove the existing devices by cutting the case between the balancing weight and the part of the case glued to the tyre; as the case is made of a material of similar colour to that of the tyre, the residual part of the case is hardly visible.

According to preferred characteristics of the invention, optionally combined:

- the weight is a lead or lead alloy or as a variant an iron alloy or as a variant a zinc-aluminium alloy, even in plastic material.

- said surface comprises a convex section, or as a variant concave, or as a variant is at least approximately a portion of a cylinder.

5 - the weight has an approximately rectangular section.

- the case has an approximately constant thickness.

- the case is made of a flexible material (as a variant, it is rigid), preferably rubber based.

10 - the case comprises sections occupying the passages passing through the weight.

- the case is glued to the surface of the weight.

- the surface is delimited by borders which define the edges.

15 - said surface is pre-coated with glue.

- said surface is provided with a tape the surfaces of which are coated with adhesive.

- the case is black, or as a variant white, or as a variant green.

20 According to preferred characteristics of the wheel according to the invention, optionally combined:

- the balancing device is arranged along the side of the tyre, close to the rim.

25 - the device is arranged radially between the rim and a portion of maximum width of the tyre.

- the balancing device radially runs along the inside of a side wall of the tyre.

- the balancing device radially runs along the outside of a side wall of the tyre.

30 - the balancing device is engaged in a groove circumferentially provided in the tyre.

- the balancing device is engaged with a groove circumferentially provided by the tyre and an edge of the rim.

35 Aims, characteristics and advantages of the invention emerge from the description which follows, given as a non-limiting illustrative example with reference to the attached drawings in which:

- Figure 1 is an elevation view of a wheel according to the invention,

- Figure 2 is a transverse cross-section view of the upper part of this wheel,

5 - Figure 3 is a transverse cross-section view of the upper part of another embodiment of a wheel according to the invention,

- Figure 4 is an elevation view of this upper part,

10 - Figure 5 is a transverse cross-section view of the upper part of yet another embodiment of the wheel according to the invention,

- Figure 6 is an elevation view of this upper part,

15 - Figure 7 is a transverse cross-section view of the upper part of a fourth embodiment of the wheel according to the invention,

- Figure 8 is an elevation view of this upper part,

20 - Figure 9 is a transverse cross-section view of the upper part of a fifth embodiment of the wheel according to the invention,

- Figure 10 is an elevation view of this upper part,

25 - Figure 11 is a longitudinal cross-section view of a first balancing device according to the invention,

- Figure 12 is a transverse cross-section view of it,

30 - Figure 13 is a longitudinal cross-section view of a second balancing device according to the invention,

- Figure 14 is a transverse cross-section view of it,

- Figure 15 is a longitudinal cross-section view of a third balancing device according to the invention,

35 - Figure 16 is a transverse cross-section view of it,

- Figure 17 is a longitudinal cross-section view of a fourth balancing device according to the invention,

- Figure 18 is a transverse cross-section view of it,

- Figure 19 is a longitudinal cross-section view of a fifth balancing device according to the invention,

5 - Figure 20 is a transverse cross-section view of it,

- Figure 21 is a perspective diagrammatic view of a balancing device in the process of being coated with glue,

10 - Figure 22 is an end view of it,

- Figure 23 is a perspective diagrammatic view of a second balancing device the front of which has been pre-coated with glue,

- Figure 24 is an end view of it,

15 - Figure 25 is a perspective diagrammatic view of a third balancing device provided with an adhesive tape.

Figures 1 and 2 represent a wheel 1 comprising a rim 2 adapted to turn about an axis of rotation Z-Z and a tyre 3 engaged around this rim. This tyre is of any type
20 adapted to equip a vehicle wheel. This tyre is provided on each of its sides 3A with a balancing device 4. Indeed, it may have only one balancing device, on one side only.

Here, this device 4 is at a distance from the edge
25 2A of the rim on which the balancing weights are usually attached; however, it is preferably arranged radially between this rim and part 3B of the tyre which has a maximum width. This has the notable advantage of maintaining the balancing device close to the rim and to
30 guarantee that the centrifugal forces which prevail will in part be taken up by this bulging part 3B of the tyre.

This balancing device 4 comprises essentially a balancing weight 5 and a case 6 in which the weight is enclosed and the constitutive material of which is of a
35 colour essentially identical to that of the constitutive material of the tyre.

This balancing weight 5 can be in standard weight as currently manufactured but without its attachment spring.

As for the case 6, it can be obtained by moulding around the balancing weight; it is preferably made of a material identical or similar to that of which the tyre of the wheel is itself made, which is favourable to a good reciprocal attachment between tyre and case; as this material is essentially the same colour as the tyre, the presence of the weight enclosed in its case is hardly visible. This small block 4 is attached by at least one of its surfaces, treated to this end, to the side of the tyre, for example by gluing. If a balancing is shown to be necessary, the operator is provided with the block described above (after he identifies the weight characteristic according to conventional balancing procedures), and applies it firmly to the desired place, directly on the side of the tyre almost at the level of the rim.

The block 4 thus fulfils its balancing function by appearing hardly visible and leaving the tyre and rim intact if it is removed.

In fact, if a new balancing becomes necessary at some stage, the operator cuts off the external part of the case concerned, using a cutting instrument, thus freeing this part at the same time as the weight which it encloses, leaving only the internal part of the block (one side) on the tyre, which remains glued to the tyre with which it blends, being of the same type and the same colour. In this case, removal of the lead is no longer displeasing as were the balancing weights attached to the rim.

Installation of the lead balancing weights on any vehicle wheel which are necessary for balancing it is thus simple and reliable (the possible choice of a material for the case independent from that of the balancing weight makes it easy to ensure a very good mechanical bond between case and tyre).

The constitutive material of the weight 5 is preferably of standard lead (lead or lead alloy) but can also be of another material such as steel, cast iron,

zinc and aluminium alloy of zamac type, ferrous or non-ferrous alloy, or even plastic (for example polypropylene, etc.).

5 The case has a thickness which is preferably approximately constant (for example of the order of one millimetre) such that the shape of the weight essentially determines that of the balancing device.

The geometry of weights 5 can be that of current weights.

10 To ensure that the block 4 fits the tyre well, this can:

- be entirely shaped as the arc of a circle to follow the round shape of the edge of the rim (Figure 1); and/or

15 - have a concave surface 4A, intended to run along the tyre so as to follow the round form of the side of the tyre (Figure 2).

In the example of Figures 3 and 4, the balancing device marked 14 runs along inside an edge 13A of the tyre 13 arranged radially inside the edge 12A of the rim 12; in this case, the weight 15 advantageously has a convex surface parallel to a convex surface 14A of the block running along the tyre, whilst the opposite surface (Figure 4) can be straight (in fact, the geometry of this
20 opposite surface is of little importance). Here, there are two balancing devices arranged on the two internal edges of the tyre.

In the example of Figures 5 and 6, where each balancing device 24 is arranged radially outside a side
30 wall 23A of the tyre 23, radially to the outside of the edge 22A of the rim 22, the weight 25 advantageously has a concave surface parallel to a concave surface 24A of the block intended to follow the convex shape of the side wall of the tyre; the geometry of the opposite surface of
35 the weight (in Figure 6) can be as desired, for example convex or plane, in particular. Here, there are also two balancing devices of two sides of the plane of the wheel.

In the previously-mentioned examples, the balancing device is installed in an available zone of the tyre without this having necessarily been designed to receive balancing devices according to the invention.

5 In Figures 7 to 10, the balancing device 34 (in Figures 7 and 8) or 44 (in Figures 9 and 10) is engaged in a channel 33A or 43A of tyre 33 or 43 provided to this end, here radially to the outside of the free edge 32A or 42A of the rim 32 or 42. In Figures 7 and 8, the device 10 34 is a section of piping engaged wholly or partially in a circumferential groove 33A of tyre 33 and the case surrounding the balancing weight 35 is an arched section (Figure 8) which has at least one surface 34A which is highly curved (Figure 7), at least approximately in the 15 shape of a section of a cylinder (here essentially a half-cylinder) intended to follow the internal surface of the groove 33A. In Figures 9 and 10, the device 44 is an arched section received in a channel 43A of the tyre 43 defining a groove with the edge 42A of the rim; the 20 balancing device 44 does not occupy all the section of this groove, remaining at a distance from this edge 42A. The case 46 surrounding the weight 45 has an arched shape with a convex surface 44A intended to run along the internal side wall presented by the tyre opposite the 25 edge 42A (as in the case of Figures 3 and 4, the internal radial section of the weight can be as desired, concave or plane, in particular). As previously, a balancing device can be provided on the internal and/or external side of the wheel, according to the location where the 30 tyre was equipped to this end.

The case of each of these previously mentioned balancing devices can be made of various materials, in practice of plastic or polymer-type material or of rubber-like material; for example, an EPDM-type material 35 can be used, but PVC can also be used. This case can be flexible or rigid according to the material chosen. This case is made around the weight, for example by duplicate moulding. Completely surrounding the weight with the case

means that the weight is firmly fixed to the rubber case such that it forms a block.

The cohesion of this block is sufficiently ensured by the mechanical resistance of the case which holds the weight (Figures 11 and 12), but it is obviously improved by the possible adherence obtained between the weight and the case material along their interfaces during manufacture, for example by duplicate moulding.

The cohesion of this block can be reinforced either:
 10 - by mechanical retention or anchorage of the case through the weight with 1 passage 60 (Figures 13 and 14), 2 passages 60 (Figures 15 and 16), even several passages 60 (Figures 17 and 18) through the weight; or

- by the insertion of a gluing product 70 between
 15 weight and case (Figures 19 and 20) in order to obtain a good adherence over all the contact surface.

The colour of the constitutive material of the case is chosen to be identical to that of the tyre (black, white, green, etc.) in order to render the block
 20 practically invisible once it is installed on the tyre; it should be noted that a person skilled in the art knows how to dye plastic or rubber materials which can be used for the case without difficulty.

In practice, as with known balancing weights, the
 25 shape and transverse dimensions (in a plane of the wheel) can be fixed and the differences in weight are obtained by differences in thickness (parallel to the axis of rotation). As a variant, the procedure can be carried out in reverse, by varying the dimension of the
 30 circumference, or even by varying several dimensions.

The balancing procedure begins with the choice of a weight device capable of compensating for the imbalance determined on the wheel in question (apparatus exists for this for standard weights and can be easily provided as a
 35 function of the distance to the axis at which the balancing devices are intended to be attached onto the tyre).

The surface of the case which is intended to be firmly fixed to the tyre is advantageously treated subsequently. This treatment could merely consist of giving it the desired geometry: in practice the geometry
 5 merely follows the complementary shape of the tyre. To ensure optimal fixing, this surface is advantageously bordered by sharp borders defining edges 80; this avoids the formation of splits between the block and the tyre capable of constituting incipient cracks which can then
 10 spread into the fixing surface between the block and the tyre. As a variant, the block sections can be tapered or in the shape of lips in order to follow the length of the tyre surface (this is obtained for example by giving the block a trapezoidal section, the large base of which is
 15 intended to extend along the surface of the tyre).

One way of obtaining an optimal adhesion is to ensure that the surfaces of the tyre and the block are clean and dry:

- a preliminary scraping of the surfaces allows
 20 the rubber to be "reactivated";
- then they are cleaned with a solvent, for example heptane; a mixture of isopropyl alcohol and water can also be used, etc.
- the block can be attached to the tyre by glue
 25 (for example of cyanoacrylate type), for example that sold by LOCTITE under the reference 406.

Figures 21 and 22 show a block or balancing device 4 according to the invention in the process of being coated with the glue 85 just before being glued against the
 30 corresponding surface of a tyre. As a variant represented by Figures 23 and 24, the block 4' is pre-coated with glue during manufacture and, when it is desired to attach it to a tyre, an optional protection film is removed to expose the layer of strongly adhesive glue 90. Figures 25
 35 and 26 describe another variation where the coating of the fixing surface of the block 4'' consisted of using a tape 95, for example coated on both surfaces with a thermoreactivatable adhesive; after removal of an

optional protection film, it is sufficient to reactivate the adhesive.

As a variant, the adhesive layer 90 or the ribbon 95 can be put in place at the last moment.

5 The block thus coated with glue (according to any one of the variants presented in Figures 21 to 26) is then positioned on the tyre at the desired position with an application of pressure for several seconds. The balancing procedure is then finished.

10 Other fixing solutions can be envisaged with, for example, local vulcanization.

As a general rule, in the examples represented, the weight and thus the balancing block have an overall possibly arched parallelepiped shape, except in the case
15 of Figures 7 and 8. Fixing to the tyre can be done, in these cases, on a single surface (Figures 2 to 4), on two surfaces (Figures 5, 6, 9 and 10) or a highly curved surface in a plane containing the axis of rotation (Figures 7 and 8), being able to be a semi-cylindrical
20 surface (possibly arched to follow the circumference of the tyre).

If a new balancing is required (assuming that the tyre is to be retained):

- either the previous block is left if it does
25 not interfere with the attachment of a new block;
- or it is cut gently at the level of the glued surface.

The balancing devices according to the invention are perfectly compatible with existing tyres and can be
30 adapted without difficulty to tyres currently in development and which are a subject of new methods of attachment to the rim (example: tyre with vertical fastening).

CLAIMS

1. Balancing device (4, 4', 4'', 14, 24, 34, 44) for a wheel, comprising a single balancing weight (5, 15, 25, 35, 45) enclosed in a case (6, 16, 26, 36, 46) the surface of which is adapted to be firmly fixed to a tyre and which is made of a material having a similar colour to that of a tyre.

2. Device according to claim 1, characterized in that the weight is made of lead or a lead alloy.

3. Device according to claim 1, characterized in that the weight is made of iron alloy.

4. Device according to claim 1, characterized in that the weight is made of zinc and aluminium alloy.

5. Device according to claim 1, characterized in that the weight is made of plastic material.

6. Device according to any one of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that said surface (14A, 44A) includes a convex section.

7. Device according to any one of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that said surface (4A, 24A) includes a concave section.

8. Device according to any one of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that the surface (34A) is at least approximately a portion of a cylinder.

9. Device according to any one of claims 1 to 8, characterized in that the weight has an approximately rectangular section.

10. Device according to any one of claims 1 to 9, characterized in that the case has an approximately constant thickness.

11. Device according to any one of claims 1 to 10, characterized in that the case is made of flexible material.

12. Device according to any one of claims 1 to 11, characterized in that the case includes sections which occupy passages (60) passing through the weight.

13. Device according to any one of claims 1 to 12, characterized in that the case is glued (70) onto the surface of the weight.

14. Device according to any one of claims 1 to 13, characterized in that the surface is delimited by borders which define edges (80).

15. Device according to any one of claims 1 to 14, characterized in that said surface is pre-coated with glue (90).

16. Device according to any one of claims 1 to 14, characterized in that said surface is provided with a tape (95) the surfaces of which are coated with adhesive.

17. Device according to any one of claims 1 to 16, characterized in that the case is black.

18. Device according to any one of claims 1 to 16, characterized in that the case is white.

19. Device according to any one of claims 1 to 16, characterized in that the case is green.

20. Wheel including a rim (2, 12, 22, 32, 42) having an axis (Z-Z), a tyre (3, 12, 23, 33, 43) and a balancing device (4, 14, 24, 34, 44) according to any one of claims 1 to 19 including a single balancing weight (5, 15, 25, 35, 45) enclosed in a case (6, 16, 26, 36, 46) a surface of which (4A, 14A, 24A, 34A, 44A) is fixed firmly to a surface (3A, 13A, 23A, 33A, 43A) of a side of the tyre and which is made of a material having a colour similar to that of the tyre.

21. Wheel according to claim 20, characterized in that it has at most one balancing device (4) per side.

22. Wheel according to claim 20 or claim 21, characterized in that the balancing device (4) is arranged along a side of the tyre, close to the rim.

23. Wheel according to any one of claims 20 to 22, characterized in that the device (4) is arranged radially between the rim and a section of maximum width (3B) of the tyre.

24. Wheel according to any one of claims 20 to 23, characterized in that the balancing device (14) radially runs along the inside of a side wall (13A) of the tyre.

5 25. Wheel according to any one of claims 20 to 23, characterized in that the balancing device (24) radially runs along the outside of a side wall of the tyre.

26. Wheel according to any one of claims 20 to 23, characterized in that the balancing device (34) is engaged in a circumferential groove (33A) provided in the
10 tyre.

27. Wheel according to any one of claims 20 to 23, characterized in that the balancing device (44) is engaged in a circumferential groove provided by the tyre and an edge of the rim.

15 28. Wheel according to any one of claims 20 to 27, characterized in that the balancing device is firmly fixed by gluing.

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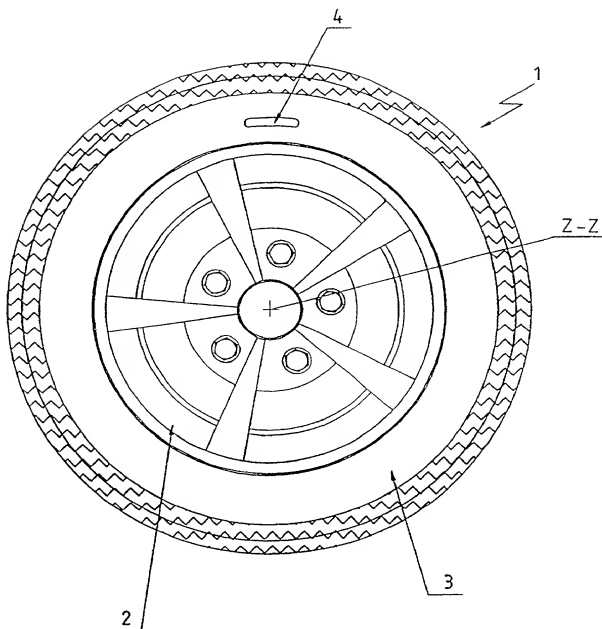
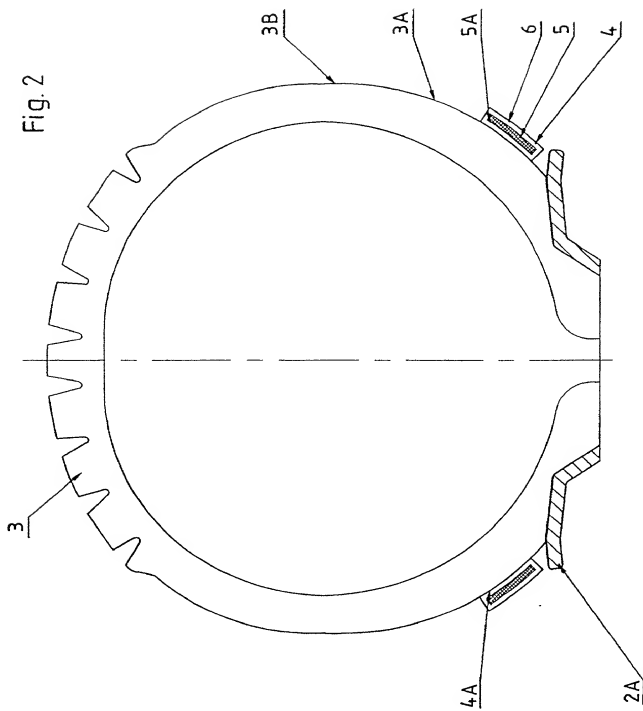


Fig. 1



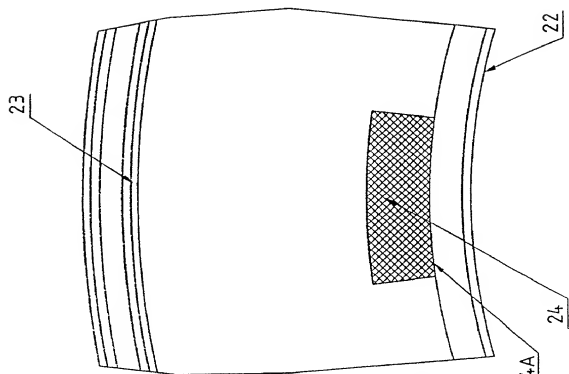


Fig. 6

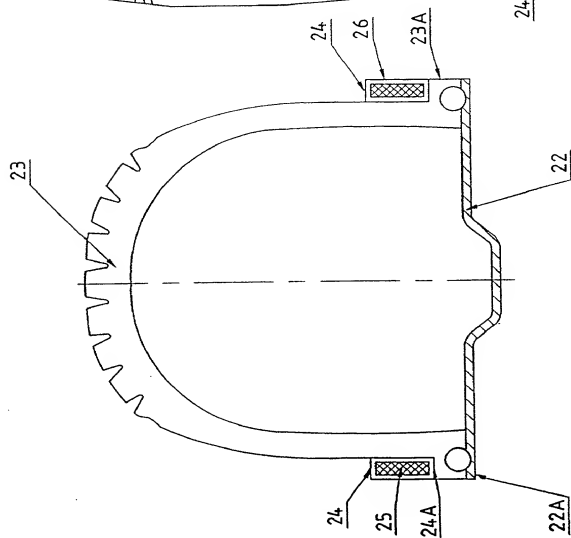


Fig. 5

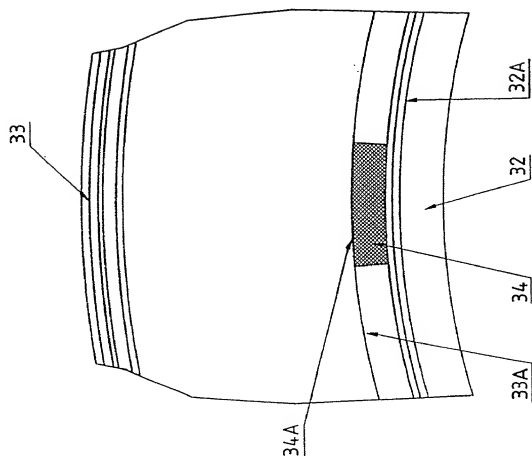


Fig. 8

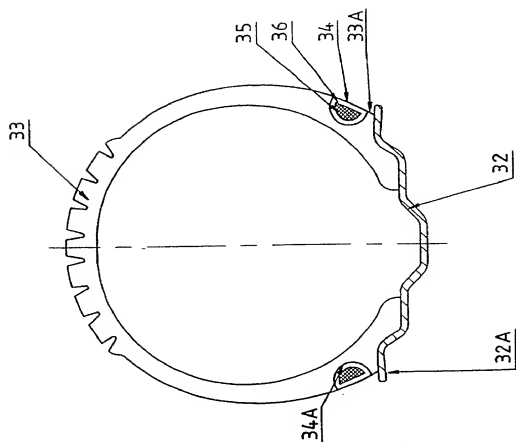


Fig. 7

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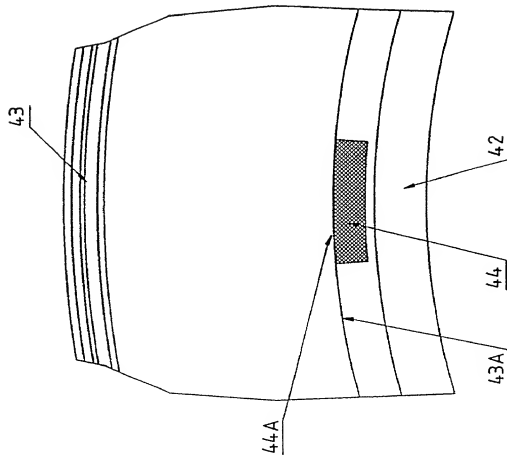


Fig. 10

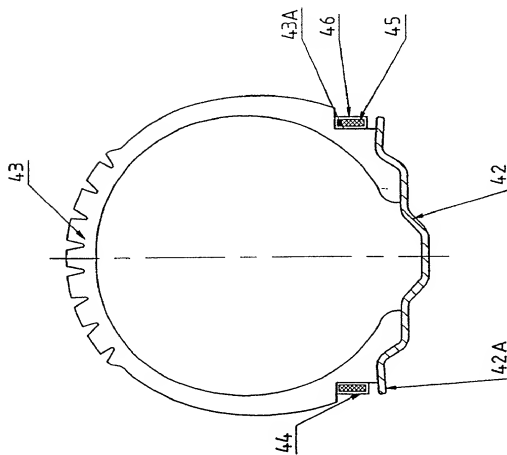


Fig. 9

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Fig.11

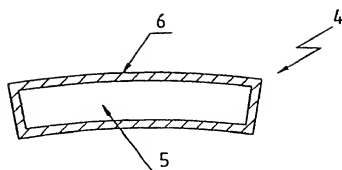


Fig.12

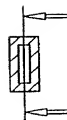


Fig.13

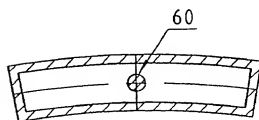


Fig.14

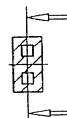


Fig.15

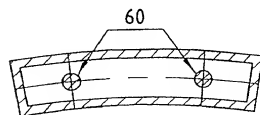


Fig.16

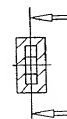


Fig.17

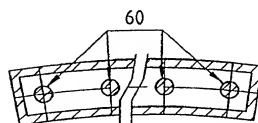


Fig.18

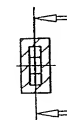


Fig.19

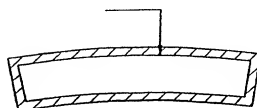
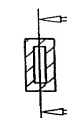


Fig. 20



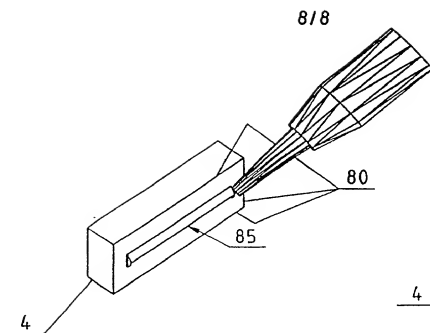


Fig. 21

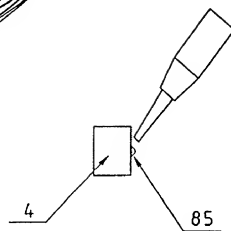


Fig. 22

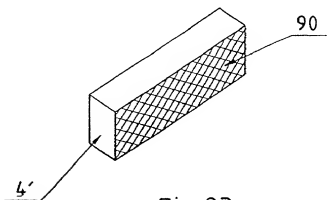


Fig. 23

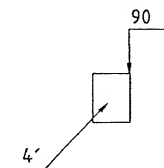


Fig. 24

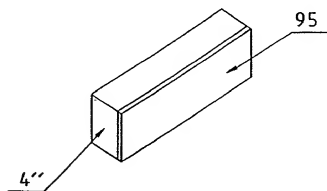


Fig. 25

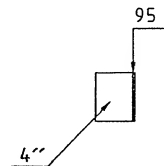


Fig. 26

DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name; that

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled, wheel-balancing device and wheel equipped with such a balancing device the specification of which:

(check one) ☒ is attached hereto.

☒ was filed on October 10, 1998 as
Application Serial No. 09/509853
and was amended on _____ (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the Office all information known by me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a).

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35 United States Code, §119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s)

Priority Claimed

<u>9712528</u>	<u>FRANCE</u>	<u>03/10/1997</u>	<u>Yes</u> No
(Number)	(Country)	(Day/Month/Year)	
 _____	 _____	 _____	 Yes No
(Number)	(Country)	(Day/Month/Year)	

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §120 of any United States applications(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations §1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national PCT international filing date of this application.

(Application Serial No.) (Filing Date) (Status-patented, pending, abandon)

(Application Serial No.) (Filing Date) (Status-patented, pending, abandon)

I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected herewith:

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Troy, Michigan 48084-4903

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

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FOR PATENT APPLICATION
(Page 2)

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Fifth Inventor's signature _____
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Residence _____

Post Office Address _____

Full Name of Sixth Joint Inventor, if any _____
Sixth Inventor's signature _____
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Post Office Address _____

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